

NSC BRIEFING

14 July 1954

POSSIBLE COSTA RICA COUP

I. Venezuela most determined of Caribbean rightists seeking overthrow Figueres by supporting ostensibly Costa Rican coup group.

A. Venezuelan president Perez, security chief Estrada reportedly plotting with Nicaragua, Panama, Dominicans, Cuba, Honduras.

B. On 22 June, Venezuelan plane dropped leaflets over Costa Rican capital.

C. Venezuela still determined oust Figueres. On 9 July, security chief "hoped" for attack; said he would not inform US should he know.

II. Panama involved: President Remon dislikes, distrusts Figueres. Panama,

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Venezuela very close.

- A. Venezuela sent free shipment arms, military mission to Panama. Arms reportedly taken to Costa Rican border.

III. Nicaragua also threat: President Somoza bitterly hates Figueres--would personally kill him if could.

- A. Relations close to break since April when assassins from Costa Rica tried kill Somoza.

IV. New Guatemalan chief of state, Castillo Armas, denies any pledge to assist anti-Figueres coup, but implies that he is sympathetic with anti-Figueres forces.

V. Costa Rican people expected defend government against any attack now likely,

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but nation lacks defense. Only armed force is 1400-man Civil Guard, organized as police. Cannot even patrol borders. has only small arms, few AA guns, no planes.

- A. Due urgent Costa Rican appeals, US shipping few small arms: to arrive 14 July.

VI. Hemisphere reactions if Figueres overthrown strongly adverse to US interests.

- A. Costa Rica widely regarded as liberal democratic country.
- B. Due even friendly Latin regimes' conviction US backed Guatemalan coup US would be held responsible Figueres' overthrow.

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